

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 19th June, 2008.

Present: Cllr Ken Lupton (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey

Officers: G Garlick (CE); H Dean (ACE); J Danks (RES); A Baxter, S McEneaney (CESC); M Robinson, C Straughan, C Wood (DNS); E Chesworth (PPC); J Grant, M Waggott, S Johnson, P Mennear (LD)

Also in attendance: Cllr Steve Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Maurice Frankland

Apologies: Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Alex Cunningham

CAB 36/08

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Mrs McCoy and Nelson declared personal non-prejudicial interests in the item entitled Scrutiny Review of Voluntary and Community Sector - Final Report of the VCS Task and Finish Group as they were Board Members of Stockton & District Advice & Information Service.

Councillor Mrs Beaumont declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in the item entitled Scrutiny Review of Voluntary and Community Sector - Final Report of the VCS Task and Finish Group as she was a Board Member of Tees Active.

Councillor Nelson declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in the item entitled Tees Valley Choice Based Lettings Scheme as he was a Board Member of Tristar.

All Members present declared a personal non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Members' Allowances as they would each receive an allowance(s) under the scheme.

CAB 37/08

Scrutiny Review of Voluntary and Community Sector - Final Report of the VCS Task and Finish Group

Consideration was given to a report that presented the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group that had been examining the Borough's Voluntary and Community Sector.

It was explained that Members had taken the opportunity to examine several issues facing the local VCS and had made recommendations in order to secure further improvements and greater understanding where necessary. The review had examined relationships with the Council and LSP, the core funded organisations including the new strategic body 'Catalyst', governance issues including member representation, volunteering, and community centres.

It was explained that following consideration by Cabinet an action plan would be submitted to the Select Committee setting out how approved recommendations would be implemented detailing officers responsible for action and timescales.

Cabinet agreed to remove recommendation 17 as they considered that there was insufficient evidence in the report to warrant an investigation. However,

assurance was given that an investigation would be carried out if sufficient evidence could be provided.

RESOLVED:-

Volunteering

1. That the Council undertake a feasibility study into encouraging employees to volunteer with accredited voluntary organisations, and the study's scope to include reference to allowing paid and unpaid time off, acknowledging and rewarding volunteers, pre-retirement information and use of volunteer champions;
2. That those organisations that receive core funding from SBC should provide a clear annual statement concerning the training and support they provide for their own volunteers, and that this should be written into funding agreements;
3. That an appropriate, willing core funded organisation be identified to have responsibility for provision of a 'volunteering bureau';

Community Centres

4. That the Corporate Directors of DNS and CESC should take forward a response to the Audit Report on Youth and Community Centres, including reference to the status of Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre and that a report should be prepared for CMT and reported back through the scrutiny monitoring process within six months;
5. The provision of a freephone to access Council services (as exists in Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre) should be examined as to whether it could be replicated elsewhere;

Governance

6. That the Council should continue to review and resolve governance issues including:
 - to ensure that Members receive appropriate support to fulfil their roles on VCS bodies, including a review of guidance currently issued, and to consider how information regarding the activities of VCS organisations appointed to by this Council may be best brought to the attention of Members;
 - reviewing which organisations should be required to complete the Governance Self Assessment documentation, and making sure that it is understandable for those which are, especially those organisations which no longer have Member representation;
7. That the Council should continue to ensure the governance compliance of 3rd sector partners when procuring services from them, and the maintenance of an up to date, central register of compliant organisations should be developed;
8. That, building on what information the Council already holds, a mapping exercise should be carried out in order to ascertain the full extent of the Borough's voluntary and community sector, where the Council has a funding or contractual relationship;

Core Funded Organisations

9. That all core funded organisations must have information readily available to the public giving details of trustees, the annual report and the accounts;
10. That there should be a memorandum of understanding between Council, SCRGA and Catalyst regarding the sharing of data of VCS groups;
11. That the following statement be included within the terms and conditions of future core funding and grant agreements: 'This grant/ funding is issued for the stated specific purpose. A condition of accepting the grant is that your organisation agrees to the Council having access to your records in order to demonstrate that funding is used appropriately';
12. That core funded organisations should consider the merits of attaining charity status, in view of the potential reduction of costs to the Council in relation to rate relief and themselves in reduction of energy costs;
13. That the council examine the issues in relation to funding and relationships (outlined on page 29-30) as part of future work in relation to the core funded organisations;

Procurement

14. That the Council should continue to examine opportunities to provide procurement help and advice to the sector;
15. That, where appropriate, funding from the Council to the VCS should be in the form of 3-year contracts in order to provide stability for organisations;

Catalyst

16. That the new Executive Director of Catalyst be requested to attend Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee within six months to provide information and clarity on the role and workings of Catalyst, including their role in allocating funding and procurement criteria, and progress in relation to building relations with all the Borough's VCS and refreshing the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

**CAB
38/08**

School Term and Holiday Dates - 2009/2010 and Protocols for Future Years

Consideration was given to a report that presented the proposed calendar of school term and holiday dates for the 2009/2010 academic year, together with a set of protocols for future years.

RESOLVED that:

1. The school term and holiday dates, shown at Appendix 1 to this report, be agreed.
2. The protocol of guiding principles, shown at Appendix 2 to this report, be

agreed.

**CAB
39/08** **Local Authority Representatives on School Governing Bodies**

Members considered the nominations to school Governing Bodies in accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school governors, approved as Minute 84 of the Cabinet (11th May 2000).

RESOLVED that the following appointments be made to the vacant Governorships in line with agreed procedures subject to successful List 99 check and Personal Disclosure:

Layfield Primary School - Mrs J Robinson
The Glebe Primary School - Mr J Brodie

**CAB
40/08** **Network Management Plan**

Consideration was given to a report relating to the Network Management Plan.

In September 2005, Cabinet received a report on the implications of the Traffic Management Act 2004. In particular, Members noted the potential for intervention by the Secretary of State if it was considered that the Council was failing to adequately perform its statutory Network Management Duty.

Subsequently, the Department for Transport issued its Intervention Criteria in 2007 under which the Council's performance would be assessed.

It was explained that the Traffic Management Act introduced a Network Management Duty on local traffic authorities. Members were provided with the details of Section 16 of the Act which set out the requirement of the new duty.

Members were advised that whilst there was no statutory requirement to develop a Network Management Plan, it set out the processes that the Council employed to meet the Council's duty and would be assessed by Government Office North East as part of the Local Transport Plan Progress Report later this year. It also demonstrated high level commitment to the duty and provided both a framework for consultation with stakeholders and a performance monitoring regime to drive improvement.

It was explained that the Network Management Plan, if approved, would be used to consult with key stakeholders and further enhancements arising from the consultation and the current Scrutiny process would be incorporated in the document over the forthcoming months. It would demonstrate the Council's commitment to its Network Management Duty and would form the basis of a submission as part of the Council's Local Transport Plan Progress Report that would be submitted to the Department for Transport before the end of 2008.

Members were provided with an outline of the key elements of the Council's first Network Management Plan.

RESOLVED that:-

(i) The draft Network Management Plan, as a basis for consultation with key stakeholders, be endorsed.

(ii) The Corporate Director for Development and Neighbourhood Services in

consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport be authorised to approve any changes to the Plan arising from the consultation process prior to submission to GO-NE in December 2008.

**CAB
41/08** **Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements**

Consideration was given to a report relating to Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements.

On 7 September 2006, Cabinet authorised the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit – acting on behalf of the Council and its partner Authorities in the sub-region – to develop and submit a Major Scheme Business Case for the Tees Valley Bus Network Review to the Department for Transport. It was advised that following rejection of the initial Business Case submitted in October 2006, a revised Business Case for the scheme was submitted to the Department for Transport on 29 February 2008.

Members of Cabinet were advised of the key elements of the proposed scheme.

It was explained that a decision from the DfT on whether to grant ‘Conditional Approval’ for the scheme was due by the end of August 2008 and, if the decision was positive, ‘Full Approval’ was expected follow by the end of the calendar year. It was noted that subject to approval being granted, works ‘on the ground’ were expected to commence early in 2009, with completion of the scheme as a whole envisaged by mid-2011.

It was explained that given the above timescale, work was currently underway to develop a detailed Project Plan for delivery of those elements of the scheme within the Borough over the next three years.

Members of Cabinet were advised that assuming that Conditional Approval for the scheme was secured in August 2008, a Borough-wide publicity campaign would be carried out over the remainder of the calendar year.

It was noted that a further report, updating Members on progress, would be brought to Cabinet in October 2008.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The scope of the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements, and the implications of the scheme for the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees be noted.
2. The submission of a revised Major Scheme Business Case to the Department for Transport on 29 February 2008 be noted, and that the Department’s decision on ‘Conditional Approval’ is expected by the end of August 2008.
3. Subject to Department for Transport approval of the Major Scheme Business Case, officers be authorised to pursue the preferred strategy for delivery of the scheme as outlined within the Report.
4. The intention to carry out a Borough-wide publicity campaign following the granting of Conditional Approval for the scheme be noted.

5. A further Report, updating Members on progress, be brought to Cabinet in October 2008.

**CAB
42/08** **Tees Valley Choice Based Lettings Scheme**

Consideration was given to a report that presented the proposed Common Allocations Policy for the Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme across the Tees Valley.

Members of Cabinet were reminded that during 2006/07 the Housing and Community Safety Committee (HCSC) undertook a study of choice based lettings (CBL) and the benefits of adopting this approach to letting properties in Stockton.

It was explained that whilst Stockton was considering this, the Government were encouraging local authorities to consider sub-regional choice-based letting schemes and made funds available to explore this approach.

A bid from the Tees Valley region was successful to explore the opportunities for developing choice-based lettings scheme with a common allocations policy across Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Darlington and Redcar and Cleveland. The funding was used to appoint a Sub Regional CBL Co-ordinator's role for 2 years to drive forward the process.

It was noted that on 15th March 2007 Cabinet gave approval for Stockton to proceed with developing and partaking in a sub-regional choice-based lettings (CBL) scheme in the Tees Valley recognising the additional benefits likely to be achieved through membership of a Tees Valley sub-regional scheme in terms of customer choice and economies of scale.

Members were advised that over the last 12 months or so, the 'Tees Valley Sub-regional Choice Based Lettings Partnership' (TVCBLP) - a steering group consisting of representatives from all 5 authorities - Stockton Borough Council, Tristar Homes, Middlesbrough Council, Erimus Housing, Hartlepool Council, Housing Hartlepool, Darlington Council, Redcar and Cleveland Council and Coast and Country Housing, had worked closely together to develop a common choice-based lettings allocations policy.

It was explained that the framework for a Common Allocation Policy had to comply with Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 and the statutory Code of Guidance: 'allocation of accommodation', issued to local authorities in November 2002. This meant that the framework had to include a method for determining which categories of applicants would be prioritised within the scheme in accordance with the reasonable preference groups as set out in s167(2) of the 1996 Act. This ensured a consistent and transparent approach to allocations across the sub region.

Members were advised that how authorities allocated their properties was mostly governed by statute with only a few areas for local influence and discretion. In adopting a common allocations policy across the Tees Valley all 9 partnering organisations had to agree to these discretionary areas. After lengthy discussion and debate a draft common allocations policy had been agreed and had been subject of extensive consultation spanning 3 months, so that a wide

range of consultation groups had an opportunity to comment and influence the policy. It was noted that a comprehensive report outlining the consultation process and outcomes was available for Members to view in the Members library.

Members of Cabinet were presented with a copy of the final proposed policy document.

It was explained that all partners in the TVCBLP were now seeking approval from their decision-making bodies to implement sub regional choice based lettings across the Tees Valley with the proposed common allocations policy.

If approval was given to proceed it was envisaged that the new choice based lettings scheme for allocating properties would be introduced in late 2008/early 2009.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The proposed choice based lettings policy for Stockton-on-Tees be adopted.
2. The proposed choice based lettings policy be subject to review, 6 months after implementation, so that its impact can be measured.
3. Following the review a report be brought back to Cabinet for their consideration.

**CAB
43/08**

Review of Parkview Residential Care Home

Consideration was given to a report relating to Parkview Residential Care Home.

Members of Cabinet were reminded that on 13 March 2008 Cabinet approved the recommendation that a closure programme be prepared for Parkview and that Officers be asked to explore the possibility of replacing Parkview Home with an Extra Care facility on the same site. Furthermore Officers were asked to begin a process of assessment with the remaining 13 residents at Parkview and their families to explore their needs both now and into the future. Cabinet requested an update report on the progress around potential extra care development and the reassessment of the current residents in 3 months time.

It was noted that following a Call In by a number of councillors, this decision was upheld on 10 April 2008 by the Executive Scrutiny Committee.

Members of Cabinet were provided with an update on the following areas:

- Communication
- Clients
- Parkview Staff
- Extra Care

Members of Cabinet agreed that at recommendation 4, the word 'Thornaby' should be replaced by the words 'the Stockton Borough'.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The closure programme continues at Parkview with resettlement of the remaining residents.
2. Staff options be considered and redeployment or redundancy be implemented.
3. The building be secured.
4. The exploration of an extra care facility for the residents of the Stockton Borough continues.

**CAB
44/08** **Minutes of Various Bodies**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of Area Partnership Boards and Tees Valley Unlimited.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings be received/approved, as appropriate:-

Western Area Partnership 28 April 2008
The Billingham Partnership 12 May 2008
TVU Leadership Board 19 March 2008

**CAB
45/08** **Expression of Interest Social Care PFI Funding - Integrated Care Service**

Consideration was given to a report that advised Members that the Council had been working in partnership with PCT colleagues to develop proposals for an integrated Health & Social Care facility, including the provision of extra care, in Billingham. This was with a view to attracting external funding through Social Care PFI Credits.

The Department of Health informed authorities in November 2007 of the availability of PFI funding for Social Care with the timescales for an initial indication of interest being extremely tight and required to be submitted by 31 December 2007. It was explained that although at this stage the ideas were conceptual, it was clear there were benefits from close working with the PCT and there were opportunities to develop innovative solutions, which addressed social care, health and wider integrated service issues.

Members were informed that the Department of Health subsequently indicated support in the council progressing to the formal 'Expression of Interest' stage. Officers from the Council had been working closely with the Primary Care Trust to develop the proposal. Members of Cabinet were provided with a summary of the key objectives of the proposal.

As part of the initial Expression of Interest in December, the bid focused on consideration of schemes across the Borough. It was explained that further work had been undertaken to review the connectivity of the health estates requirements and the bid criteria and this had identified Billingham as a key priority. It was noted that there were benefits in taking forward a Billingham scheme as there was no extra care provision in this area, there was greater potential for connecting health and council plans, and the regeneration

opportunities could be realised more effectively. However the work with the PCT had helped provide a framework for future service developments in Stockton and future bids to this fund could be explored.

It was advised that the project in Billingham would aim to deliver:-

- An extra care facility which would provide long term residential care services for the elderly and vulnerable adults.
- An integrated facility which would provide access to information, advice and a range of services including:-
 - Adults & Childrens integrated service area staff
 - Exercise, rehabilitation and physiotherapy services
 - One-stop shop to access information (multi service centre)
 - Resource rooms/day facilities
 - Integrated care services (polyclinic)
 - Library

It was explained that the integrated approach to health and social care with associated facilities offered a unique opportunity to address a cohesive and planned service model which was focused on the needs of the population in Billingham.

The proposal was complimentary to the PCT's 'Momentum Pathways to Health' project, which explored the provision of health services as near to people's homes as possible and looking for options for delivery of community based services. There was also the potential to incorporate one or more GP practice(s) into the facility and this was currently being explored.

Members were advised that various sites were currently being investigated and it was anticipated that the facilities would be within or close to the town centre.

It was noted that the costs would be shared between the PCT and the Council. The Expression of Interest aimed to secure PFI Credits to fund the social care element of the Scheme (currently estimated at £15m).

Following submission of the Expression of Interest, if successful, the Council would need to submit a full Outline Business Case, which would firm up details of costs, the scheme itself, funding sources and affordability. This Business Case would be reported to Cabinet for approval.

RESOLVED that the Expression of Interest for PFI Credits be endorsed.

CAB 46/08 **Members' Allowances**

Consideration was given to a report that provided details of the Independent Members' Allowances Remuneration Panel's ("the Remuneration Panel") report following the previous decision in February 2008 to ask the Remuneration Panel to undertake a further review and report back.

It was explained that the Remuneration Panel undertook a review of Members' allowances in September 2007 and produced a report in October 2007. The report was submitted to Cabinet on 14 February 2008.

What became clear as a result of the Panel's work and Members' consideration of the Panel's report was that there were widely differing views on the most appropriate way forward. The Remuneration Panel had also not had the benefit of the report from the Councillors Commission.

Members were advised that, in light of all of this, it was agreed that the Remuneration Panel should be asked to review their findings, taking into account the views and suggestions outlined as part of the previous review (and referred to in the report to Cabinet on 14 February 2008); the outcome of further discussions with Group Leaders; any additional views from Members and consideration of the Councillors' Commission report previously referred to.

Members were informed that for 2007/08 the Council agreed an inflationary backdated increase for basic, SRAs and co-optees allowances and an inflation increased backdated SRA for the Leaders of the Labour Group and Thornaby Independent Association; and a continuation of the 2007/08 Allowances Scheme, as amended, for 2008/09.

It was explained that the Remuneration Panel had concluded its further review and the resulting report was presented to Cabinet for consideration. A document detailing suggested Cabinet recommendations to Council was circulated.

Cabinet discussed the report and document and agreed a recommendation to Council.

RECOMMENDED that:-

1. Firstly, Council consider the Remuneration Panel's recommendations as at addendum A, attached.

2. In the event that Council reject the Remuneration Panel's recommendations, consideration be given to one of the options as detailed in addendum B, attached.

**CAB
47/08 SPD 4 Conservation Areas and Historic Environment Folder
Supplementary Planning Document, Local List**

Consideration was given to a report relating to the provisional list of Buildings of Local Architectural and Historic Interest (Local List) which was to be adopted into the Conservation and Historic Environment Folder, Supplementary Planning Guidance Document (CaHEF SPD).

It was explained that as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) the Conservation Areas and Historic Environment Folder would sit within the Council's Local Development Framework.

The list had been compiled through public nominations which had been judged by an independent expert panel under set criteria. Members of Cabinet were provided with the details of the panel and the nomination criteria.

It was explained that due to the number of nominations received, they would be reviewed in manageable batches until a final list was produced. Members of

Cabinet were presented with the first round of buildings considered by the panel which would go forward as the initial Local List.

Members of Cabinet discussed whether a building previously excluded from the list could be nominated for reconsideration by the Panel. It was agreed that an extra recommendation would be included in order that the Head of Planning could determine whether or not there were any new material considerations that would warrant reconsideration.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

1. The content of the first round of the local List be considered and approved so that it may be added to the Conservation Areas and Historic Environment Folder (Supplementary Planning Document 4), so that it may become a material planning consideration in determining planning applications.

2. Should any building previously excluded from the local list be nominated for reconsideration, the Head of Planning would determine whether there are any new additional material considerations that would warrant the building being reconsidered by the panel.